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2 February 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Current Intelligence

SUBJECT : Foreknowledge of Libyan Coup

REFERENCE : Mr. Maury's Memorandum of 23 January
(OLC70-0061)

1. We have searched our files and found no reference to an Iranian warning of the September Libyan coup. This does not necessarily mean that some such warning was not passed on, but in any event it did not reach us. The Shah has frequently alluded to his concern for the future of conservative Arab leaders but has never been specific on threats to them.

2. The number of Soviet naval ships in the Mediterranean was at an all time high just before the coup. They were, however, engaged in a large scale exercise for the benefit of senior Soviet naval commanders and there still appears to have been no connection at all with events in Libya.

3. In our post-mortem on the coup we found no information which even in hindsight could have served to indicate that it was coming. Any judgments at the time on a possible turnover would have centered on the possible abdication of the King or on some move by the Shahli brothers to seize control.

4. It is our understanding (via the DIA Libyan current analyst) that DIA, which has received the same query from Mr. Blandford (similarly unspecific), will probably provide the same response.

5. Nor are we aware of any Iranian warning in the hands of our counterparts in State, INR.

25X1A

Deputy Chief, Middle East Africa Division
Office of Current Intelligence

OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP

TO	NAME AND ADDRESS	DATE	INITIALS
1	D/OCI 25X1A		<i>JS</i>
2	Attn: Mr. [redacted]		
3	Maurry 7 D43		<i>JS</i>
4			
5			
6			
ACTION		DIRECT REPLY	PREPARE REPLY
APPROVAL		DISPATCH	RECOMMENDATION
COMMENT		FILE	RETURN
CONCURRENCE		INFORMATION	SIGNATURE

Remarks:

*I have briefed
Blanchard on
this*

*N
RK*

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DATE

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OLC 70-0061

23 January 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Mr. John R. Blandford, Chief Counsel, House Armed Services Committee, Complaint That Agency Did Not Predict Libyan Coup

STATOTHR

1. During our discussion today on several matters, Mr. John R. Blandford, Chief Counsel, House Armed Services Committee, complained that the Agency had apparently been caught flat-footed regarding the Libyan coup. Blandford showed me a paper signed by a member of his staff (Bill Cook) stating that [] had told someone (unidentified) at a luncheon that the Iranian government had known of and warned the U.S. of the impending coup in Libya and had commented that "70 Soviet warships" were in the Eastern Mediterranean at the time. Blandford complained that if the Iranians knew about it, we should have, and even if we didn't, we should have taken the Iranian warning more seriously.

2. I commented that:

a. In almost any 24 hour period our Commo traffic would probably contain at least a dozen rumors of impending coups, most of which never materialize.

b. While I didn't know about this particular case, after any coup all sorts of people turn up with 20-20 hindsight claiming "I told you so."

c. When a dozen or so colonels get together to plot a coup, whether in the Middle East, Latin America, or wherever, we have no way of guaranteeing that one of them will be a CIA agent, especially when we are urged by our policymakers to avoid all associations with groups and individuals suspected of intriguing against friendly regimes.

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3. However, I told Blandford I would look into the facts in this case and let him know just what the Iranian's "warning" really amounted to.

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JOHN M. MAURY
Legislative Counsel

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OLC/JMM:rw (26 Jan 70)

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1	Mr. [redacted] 25X1A		JW
2	7F24 [redacted]		
3	[redacted] 25X1A		
4	[redacted]		
5			
6			
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Remarks:

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27 Jan

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